

Draft CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY



Pobalscoil Neasáin aims to protect the wellbeing of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. The Board of Management has reviewed and approved a critical incident management plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

A Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) has been established to steer the development and implementation of the Critical Incident Management Plan.

The CIMT in formulating the plan have consulted resource documents available to schools on www.education.ie and including:

- Responding to Critical Incidents Guidelines and Resources (NEPS 2016)
- Suicide Prevention in Schools: Best Practice Guidelines (IAS, National Suicide Review Group 2002)
- Suicide Prevention in the Community – A Practical Guide (HSE 2011)
- Well-Being in Post-Primary School – Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion (DES, DOH, HSE 2015)

Definition of a critical incident

The staff and management of Pobalscoil Neasáin recognise a critical incident to be “an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school”. Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of our local community.

“A Critical Incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school”

(Responding to Critical Incidents; NEPS Guidelines & Resource Materials for Schools)

Types of incidents might include:

- The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death
- An intrusion into the school
- An accident involving members of the school community
- A major accident/tragedy in the wider community
- Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism, etc.
- A major accident/tragedy in the wider community

Aim of Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP)

The aim of the CIMP is to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of an incident, to enable us to maintain a sense of control and to ensure that appropriate support is offered to students and staff. Having a good plan should also help ensure that the effects on students and staff will be limited. It should enable us to affect a return to normality as soon as possible.

We have put systems in place to help to build resilience in both staff and students, thus preparing them to cope with a range of life events. These include measures to address both the physical and psychological safety of the school community.

Physical safety

Pobalscoil Neasáin has a Health & Safety policy. Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked and maintained. An evacuation plan has been formulated and regular fire drills are conducted. Only the front gate is open during school hours. Both internal and external CCTV cameras monitor corridors, doors and outdoor spaces. Caretakers are on duty from the opening of the school to the closing. Breaks etc. are supervised by teaching and SNA staff under the Supervision and Substitution scheme. All side entrances to the school grounds are closed during the school day and are only opened at the beginning and end of the school day and at lunch time.

Psychological safety

The management and staff of Pobalscoil Neasáin aim to use available programmes and resources to address the personal and social development of students, to enhance a sense of safety and security in the school and to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is integrated into the work of the school. Issues such as grief and loss; communication skills; stress and anger management; resilience; conflict management; problem solving; help-seeking; bullying; decision making and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse are addressed in the SPHE and RSE programmes. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision.

Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE.

Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Procedures and the name of the Designated Liaison Person

Books and resources on difficulties affecting the post primary school student are available

Information is provided on mental health in general and such specific areas as signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety

One member of staff has attended specialist training in the ASIST programme provided by the HSE.

The school has developed links with a range of external agencies – this list is not exhaustive:

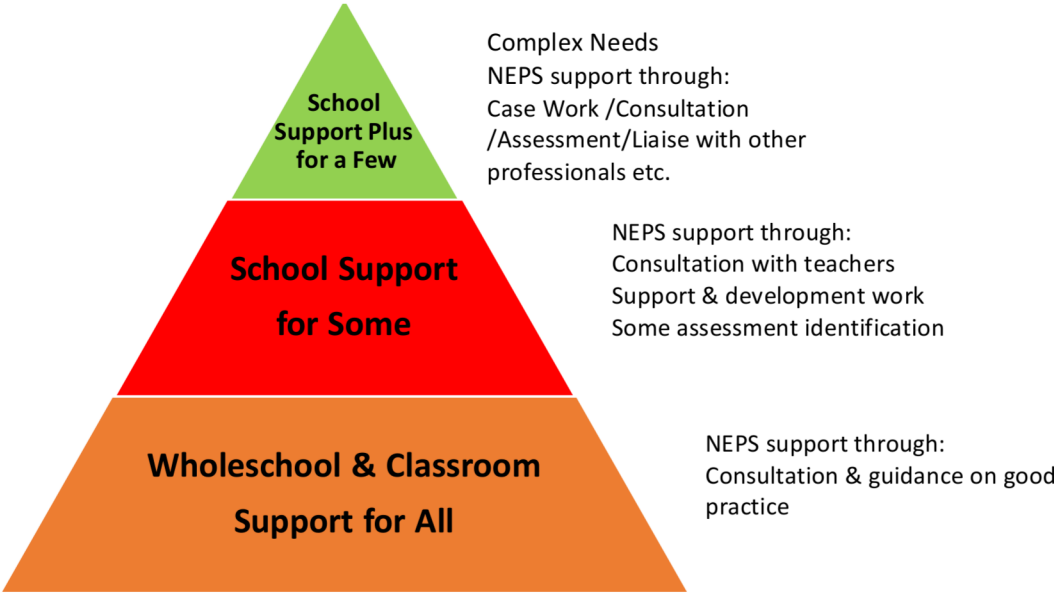
Gardaí: Howth/Raheny	Tusla	CAHMS
NEPS	Jigsaw	Pieta House
Teen Counselling - Crosscare	Samaritans	KCCP
Baldoyle Family Resource Centre	Aware	St Johns Glasnevin
	Belong to	St Joseph's Fairview
Swords/Baldoyle Youth Service	Cura	Doras Buí
Alcoholics Anonymous	AlAnon	Bodywhys
School Parents Support Network	St Francis Hospice	Turas Springboard
Maranatha Youth Club	Shout Out	Parents Plus
Cycle Against Suicide	Inspire	St Claires Temple St.
Aspire	Barnados	

Inputs to students by external providers are carefully considered in the light of criteria about student safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers. See DES Circulars 0023/2010 (Post-Primary)

The school has a clear anti-bullying policy and deals with incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy

There is a care system in place in the school using the “Continuum of Support” approach which is outlined in the NEPS documents published in 2010 for post primary schools. See also Student Support Teams in Post Primary Schools (2014).

NEPS: A Continuum of Support



Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the designated staff member (e.g. Chaplain, guidance counsellor, Year Head, P/DP or teacher), concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is sought. Parents/guardians are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency.

A Student Support (previously referred to as Care) team meets weekly within the school. This team is made up of a member of the SMT, Year Head of appropriate year group, Chaplain, Guidance, Resource and LCA coordinator (5/6th year).

An external counsellor for students is funded through school fundraising and a Tusla grant for 6 sessions a week.

Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves. For teaching and SNA staff this is through the DES funded Inspire. While for ancillary staff it is funded through the ACCS.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team are selected on a voluntary basis and will retain their roles for at least one school year. The members of the team will meet annually to review and update the policy and plan. Each member of the team has a dedicated critical incident folder. This contains a copy of the policy and plan and materials particular to their role, to be used in the event of an incident.

Preparation of CIMT Roles:

The key roles which need to be covered are as follows:

TEAM LEADER

BOM LIAISON

GARDA LIAISON

STAFF LIAISON

STUDENT LIAISON

PARENT / GUARDIAN LIAISON COMMUNITY LIAISON

MEDIA LIAISON

ADMINISTRATOR

The members of the team involved in any incident and their responsibilities will depend on the (i) nature & seriousness of CI (ii) the skillset required (iii) availability of individuals.

Outlined below are some points on the key responsibilities of each role.

TEAM LEADER: Pat McKenna Principal

Determines that an incident is critical and assesses the level of seriousness and the appropriate level of response

Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
Coordinates the tasks of the team

Liaises with the Board of Management; DES; NEPS; SEC;

Liaises with the bereaved family.

In the absence of the team leader, the position will be assumed by Ms. Bríd Ní Annracháin DP and/or Ms. Karol Sadleir DP

GARDA LIAISON: Pat McKenna

Liaises with the Gardaí

Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared.

STAFF LIAISON: Bríd Ní Annracháin/Karol Sadleir

Leads briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known, gives staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions, outlines the routine for the day

Advises staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable students
Provides materials for staff (from their critical incident folder) Keeps staff updated as the day progresses

Is alert to vulnerable staff members and contacts them individually
Advises them of the availability of the EAS (Inspire) and gives them the contact number.

STUDENT LIAISON: Bríd Ní Annracháin/Karol Sadleir DP/Year Head(s)

At post-primary level, may co-ordinate information from tutors and year heads about students they are concerned about

Alerts other staff to vulnerable students (appropriately)

Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder)

Maintains student contact records (R1)

Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed.

COMMUNITY/AGENCY LIAISON: Guidance Counsellors

Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of key parents, such as members of the Parents Council, Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources.

Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral. Is alert to the need to check credentials of individuals offering support. Coordinates the involvement of these agencies. Reminds agency staff to wear name badges. Child protection should be considered at all times.

Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies.

PARENT/GUARDIAN LIAISON: Celine Donohoe Chaplain

Ensures that materials e.g. candles, tea-lights, music, book suitable as a condolence book, refreshments etc. are available and accessible

Visits the bereaved family with the team leader

Arranges parent meetings, if held

May facilitate such meetings, and manage 'questions and answers' sessions

Ensures that parental consent is obtained where appropriate.

In conjunction with the principal ensures that appropriate sample letters are prepared and available on the school's IT system ready for adaptation

Sets up room for meetings with parents & Meets with individual parents

Maintains a record of parents seen

Provides appropriate materials for parents (from their critical incident folder).

MEDIA LIAISON: Pat McKenna

In advance of an incident, will consider issues that may arise and how they might be responded to (e.g. students being interviewed, photographers on the premises, etc.)

In the event of an incident, will liaise where necessary with the SEC, relevant teacher unions etc.

Staff are advised that only the dedicated media person should engage with media etc.

Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management)

ADMINISTRATOR: Pamela Carthy

Maintenance of up to date telephone numbers of:

Parents/guardians - Teachers - Emergency services

Takes telephone calls and notes those that need a response

Ensures that adequate credit is available on Vsware to facilitate the sending of a large number of texts.

Assists the Chaplain in ensuring that templates are available on the school's IT system and ready for adaptation

Prepares and sends out letters, emails and texts

Photocopies materials as needed

Maintains records

Record keeping

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep records of phone calls made and received, letters emails and texts sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, material used etc., in so far as is practical. The school administrative staff will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters/emails, photocopying materials etc.

Confidentiality and good name considerations

The management and staff of Pobalscoil Neasáin have a responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of the people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of any public statements. School staff will bear this in mind, and will seek to ensure that students do so also. For instance, the term 'suicide' or "death by suicide" will not be used unless there is confirmed information that death was due to suicide, and that the family involved consents to its

use. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead. Similarly, the word 'murder' should not be used until it is legally established that a murder was committed. The term 'violent death' may be used instead.

Critical incident rooms

In the event of a critical incident:

Computer Room and/or Staff Room - will be the main room used to meet the staff

Oratory/Hidden Gem

- for meetings with students
- quiet/reflective space for students

Fáilte Room - for parents

Principal's office - for media

Chaplain's Office/Hidden Gem - for individual sessions with students

Guidance Room

Resource Room – area for supporting students with SNAs

Other Offices as required - for other visitors

Other rooms are required

Consultation and communication regarding the plan

Staff views were canvassed in the preparation of this policy and plan. Students and parent/guardian representatives were also consulted and asked for their comments and input.

Our school's final policy and plan in relation to responding to critical incidents has been made available to all staff. Each member of the critical incident team has a personal copy of the plan. All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by the principal, Mr. P. McKenna.

The plan will be updated annually

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEMPLATE

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM		
Role	Name / Email Address	Telephone
Team Leader	Pat McKenna principal@psn.ie patpsn@gmail.com (out of school hours)	
Garda Liaison	Pat McKenna	
Staff Liaison	Bríd Ní Annracháin deputy@psn.ie Karol Sadleir DPSadleir@psn.ie	
Student Liaison	Bríd Ní Annracháin deputy@psn.ie Karol Sadleir DPSadleir@psn.ie With Chaplain/Guidance with Year Head(s)	
Parent Liaison	Chaplain Celine Donohoe chaplain@psn.ie Guidance with Year Head(s)	
Community / Agency Liaison	Guidance with Year Head(s) Eimear O’Hehir guidance@psn.ie Chaplain	
Media Liaison	Pat McKenna	
Administrator	Ms. Pamela Carthy office@psn.ie	

Chairperson BOM	Mr. John Hogan	
NEPS	Jacqueline Horan	

Ancillary Staff		Contact Details
Mr. Prim St Luis	Caretaker	
Mr. Noel Lennon	Caretaker	
Ms. Pamela Carthy	Administrator	
Ms. Mary McVeigh	Administrator	
Ms. Claire Brett	Administrator	

Parents Association		
Valerie Tyndall	Chairperson	

Critical Incident Rooms	
Room	Designated Purpose
Computer Room	Main Room for meeting staff
Oratory	Meetings with Students
Hidden Gem	Meetings with students
Fáilte Room	Meetings with parents
Principal's Office	Meetings with Media

SHORT TERM ACTIONS – DAY 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information Who, what, when, where?	
Determine level of incident	
Convene a CIMT meeting - specify time and place clearly Clarify & Assign roles of CIMT	
Contact external agencies?	
Arrange supervision for students	
Hold staff meeting	
Agree schedule for the day	All staff
Inform students - (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	
Compile a list of vulnerable students	
Contact/visit the bereaved family	
Prepare and agree media statement and deal with the media	
Inform parents/guardians	
CIMT review and plan day 2	
Hold end of day staff briefing	

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS - (DAY 2 AND FOLLOWING DAYS)

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1	Team leader
Meet external agencies	
Meet whole staff	
Arrange support for students, staff, parents/guardians	
Visit the injured	
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	
Make decisions about school closure	BOM

FOLLOW-UP BEYOND 72 HOURS

Task	Name
Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class teachers
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	
Decide on memorials and anniversaries	BOM/Staff, parents and students
Review response to incident and amend plan	Staff/BOM

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

(To be displayed in staff-room, school office and Principal's office etc.)

GARDA Howth 01 6664900 Raheny 01 6664300	
HOSPITALS	
Beaumont 01 8093000	
MATER 01 8032000	
Temple Street 018784200	
FIRE BRIGADE	112
School Bus	Keith 087 6611536
Tusla: Duty Social Worker	01 8708000
CAMHS:	01 8034793
Pieta House	01 6235606
NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST Jacqueline Horan	
NEPS Head Office	01 8892700
DES	01 8896400
ACCS	01 460 1150

ASTI	01 6040160
TUI	01 4922588
Catholic:	
Baldoyle	Fr. Peter O'Connor 01 8322060
Bayside	Fr. Seamus Connell 01 8323150
Howth	Fr. Gerry Tanham 01 8167599
Kilbarrack	Fr. Finbar Neylon 014501372
Donaghmede	Fr. Liam Lacey 01 8322396
Raheny	01 8323083
Methodist Church Sutton: Rev. David Nixon 01 8329185	
STATE EXAMS COMMISSION	01 6442700
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE EAP/Inspire	1800 411057